

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2005

The Honorable James E. Cason  
Associate Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Cason:

We write to request an extension of time for Seneca and Cayuga Counties (the Counties) to comment on the land-in-trust application recently submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) by the Cayuga Nation of Indians (the Nation). Given the fact that the impending BIA decision on this application is complex, profound and long term, it is essential that the affected municipalities be given adequate time to analyze the proposal and to prepare comments for the record. We believe that the current timeline does not allow for that to happen.

On December 5, 2005, officials with Seneca and Cayuga Counties received a letter from the BIA Eastern Regional Office, dated November 30, 2005, advising them that the BIA has under consideration a land-in-trust application for the use and benefit of the Cayuga Nation of Indians of New York. Specifically, the letter invites the Counties and other impacted governmental entities to submit written comments, within 30 days, on the proposed acquisition.

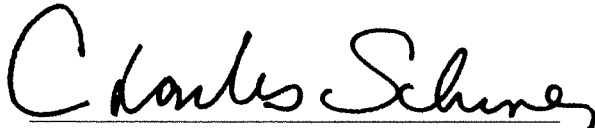
By letter dated December 9, 2005, the law firm representing the Counties wrote to the Acting Director of the BIA Eastern Regional Office, requesting an extension of time to provide comments and information on the proposed acquisitions (refer to attached letter). The letter points out that it will be necessary to gather specific as well as general information with respect to the overall impact of the proposed acquisitions. Therefore, the Counties will require information from numerous department heads and governmental officials. However, as a result of the upcoming holiday season, many of the officials are unavailable to provide immediate comments. Further, the letter explains that the Counties are in the process of engaging outside contractors to analyze and prepare comments for this complex proposal.

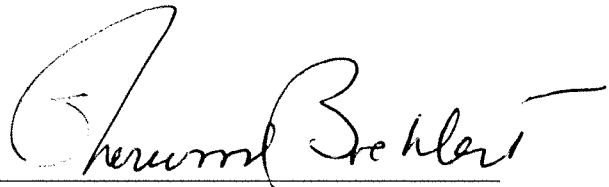
As you recall, Madison and Oneida Counties also expressed concern about the extremely limited amount of time for written comments. We appreciate that the Department eventually granted Madison and Oneida Counties a 60-day extension of time to submit comments.

At this juncture, we believe that Seneca and Cayuga Counties and all other impacted governmental entities will not have sufficient time in which to properly gather the required data and prepare comments on the application. Accordingly, we urge you to grant a request for an extension of time so that the Counties may be able to give careful consideration to the facts and to provide meaningful comments.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to an expeditious response.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Charles E. Schumer

  
Representative Sherwood Boehlert